

A Practical Guide to Social Media

by Chris, May 2009

I just published this month's newsletter, which is [a practical guide to social media](#). Whether you're already immersed in it or you're still wondering how to best integrate it into your life and work, social media has probably been on your mind lately. I'm willing to bet that whichever state you find yourself in, user or lurker, you're probably still a bit overwhelmed. My goal here was to focus on some particular tools that offer some real practical value to you.

As I was preparing for this newsletter, I stopped to consider what exactly social media means. I really like the [Wikipedia definition](#), which reads:

"Social media are primarily Internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information among human beings."

I like this definition precisely *because it's so general*. See, eventually (if not already), what we think of as social media will simply be the standard way of using the internet. We are moving inexorably from a unilateral display vs. receive approach to web-based content to a multilateral paradigm where anyone and everyone can interact around specific content. Sure, there are going to be bumps in the road that upset our personal and professional sensibilities, but it's my hope that we eventually settle in to an approach that facilitates honest, forthright communication and transactions between individuals and businesses. In other words, today you may rightly feel that social media is exhausting, but as we all integrate it into our daily lives in various practical ways, it should become much more satisfying and productive. If not, we can all head for the hills ;-)

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